

Outdoor Education Newsletter

What's New? By Jill

Spring is in the air at Pathfinder Ranch! Leaves are budding on the cottonwood trees, yucca and nolina stalks are starting to bloom, spring migratory birds are stopping through, and colorful wildflowers can be found in the forest and meadow.

We recently introduced five new nature center-hatched chickens into the farm. All five chickens were named by the naturalists after beans. The five beans—

Magic, Lima, Pinto, Coffee and Jelly—are enjoying their new home and freedom to free-range.

This past weekend, April 14th, we celebrated the Palm Springs Pathfinders and our Board of Directors at a picnic to thank them for all of the hard work they do to make Pathfinder Ranch and the Boys and Girls Club of Palm Springs so successful. We hope that everyone is enjoying the start to spring and getting

outside in Southern California!

Our Summer Camp still has openings in sessions 1, 2, 4, and 6. Check out our website if you're interested in sending your child (back) to camp. During a week-long session, campers will enjoy activities such as horseback riding, arts and crafts, and rock climbing. There are scholarships available and volunteer leadership opportunities for older youth (high school age).

Permaculture By Trail Mix

For visiting schools, one of the most popular classes at Pathfinder Ranch is our Permaculture program. Combining experiences at our garden and farm, students learn more about energy as it relates to food production and consumption. They can observe the roles for different types of organisms (producers, consumers, and decomposers) and how humans fit into that ecosystem (CA Environmental Principles & Concepts). With our hands-on approach to learning, students will plant and transfer vegetables, tour

our greenhouse, interact with the goats, pigs, chickens and alpacas, and



of course, get dirty doing all the important farm chores. When all the hard work is done, students have time to reflect on their experiences. Journal assignments can include drawing zoomed-in versions of a plant in the garden and taking notes of the smallest details, or sketching a model of the unique adaptations for their favorite farm animal. We hope classes like these are memorable for the students while helping them to better understand the world around them and how humans are a part this global system.

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Student Quotes:

- "I learned that I really do care for the environment and I want to help it in any way I can."
- "Thank you for teaching me so much about the environment and saving water."
- "Thanks to you guys now I care more, and I'm encouraging other people to take care of the planet. You guys made this adventure one I'll never forget."

Featured Green Space: Indian Canyons By Mel

Located in Palm Springs, the Indian Canyons are a sacred, ancestral home of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. While hiking in these beautiful canyons, you can see remnants of house pits, irrigation ditches, dams, and petroglyphs that are important still today to the Cahuilla and even scientists! Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, there are 60 miles of different hiking trails to pick from. This would be a great weekend day trip this spring before the summer heat. www.indian-canyons.com



DIY T-Shirt Bags By Juniper

It's almost Earth Day! A fun way to help the earth is to upcycle, also known as creative reuse, which transforms old items into something useful rather than throwing it away. There are plenty of things you can reuse. If you have a t-shirt you don't wear, you can make it into a bag in just a few steps.

1. Cut off the sleeves and neck of the shirt.
2. Cut the bottom into small strips, like in the following picture...



3. Turn the shirt inside out and tie the opposing strips together, closing the bottom of the bag.
4. Turn it right side out and you have a bag!



City Nature Challenge & AEOE Conference By Lilly

The annual City Nature Challenge takes citizen science to the next level. 70 cities across the globe will compete on April 27-30 to engage the most people, make the most observations of nature, and identify the most species. Los Angeles County is the closest area to us that's participating in this amazing event. Go to www.citynaturechallenge.org and observe as much nature in an urban environment as possible. Good luck!

That same weekend is an environmental education conference

hosted by the California Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (AEOE). AEOE is a volunteer run organization that provides resources and professional development to educators in various field from non-formal science camps to classroom teachers. The upcoming AEOE conference will be held April 27-29 in Malibu

with workshops on citizen science, nature journaling, Environmental Principles & Concepts, and classroom resources. Some of the Pathfinder instructors will be attending! www.aeo.org/events/



Pathfinder Ranch is a non-profit organization founded in 1964 that is dedicated to connecting people to nature and each other. We offer outdoor education field trips, youth summer camp, and retreat opportunities for groups of all types and ages. We take pride in providing affordable and high quality programming throughout the year. Check out our website and Facebook page for more information, and contact us if you have questions.

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